

# Electronic Health Records How Do They Benefit Me?



How many times have you been asked for your medical history?  
How many medications, doses, lab tests or treatments can you remember?

With your consent, electronic health information exchange will allow doctors, nurses, pharmacists and other health care providers to securely access your complete up-to-date medical information electronically before you arrive for your appointment. This will alleviate the need for you to provide this information over and over again and reduce the likelihood that you will have unnecessary tests or be prescribed medications that don't work or could cause harm.

## What is Happening in Illinois?

To jumpstart how patient health information can be shared quickly among health providers to improve patient care, Illinois created the Illinois Health Information Exchange.



The Exchange is a secure electronic network that allows authorized providers to send and receive vital patient information quickly and in compliance with state and federal law.

More information, visit [HIE.Illinois.gov](http://HIE.Illinois.gov)



The secure and efficient transfer of patients' medical information is beneficial for everyone:

### What Health Exchange Means for Patients

If your health care providers have electronic access to your medical records before you arrive in their office, you'll benefit from:

- + Improved communications, greater safety and better care because they have your complete and accurate medical history
- + Less paperwork, many more conveniences and more time together with your doctor

### What Health Exchange Means for Health Care Providers

Securely sharing updated, electronic patient information with other providers enables you to:

- + Access and securely share a patient's medical history no matter where they are receiving care - improve coordination of care, reduce administrative costs, save on storage, paper, faxes, toner and shredders, receive patient information quickly in real time, while allowing you to spend more time with your patients.
- + Eligible professionals and hospitals may also qualify for Medicare and Medicaid incentive payments.  
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### What Health Exchange Means for Policymakers

Higher quality, more efficient health care through health information exchange helps to:

- + Improve health care quality and outcomes, control the cost of health care, maximize federal health information technology funding in Illinois and for its care providers
- + Enhance public health and disease surveillance, help reduce disparities

# Health Information Technology

## Improving Health Care For All Americans



Health care providers across the country are participating in electronic health information exchange to communicate vital medical information securely and efficiently and improve the care of their patients. Secure exchange will improve the coordination of patient care, reducing unnecessary medical treatments and tests and help avoid costly mistakes such as small missing medical details that can have a big effect on treatment and outcomes.

Despite the widespread development of health information technology, most patients' records are still stored on paper, often in inaccessible filing cabinets spread out at various offices, labs, clinics, and hospitals. Paper information is shared by fax, by mail or even by patients carrying them to appointments. Without a secure method to exchange a complete, up-to-date medical record, a provider might order tests a patient has already received or write prescriptions that might cause a harmful interaction with current medications. Health information exchange ensures that everyone, in every care setting has secure access to the same information.

Health information exchange is about improved patient care and treatment. It will also provide great consumer conveniences such as sending out reminders, follow-up care instructions, communicating with doctors through secure email, having less paper work to fill out, assisting in caring for a parent or a child and assuring that an emergency room has up-to-date health information that can save lives in a time of crisis.

Electronic health information exchange saves time for both doctors and patients and has the potential to reduce costs and improve health outcomes.

While much work remains, significant progress has been made in Illinois and across the country toward bringing health and medical records into the digital age.

*For more information:*

To learn more about health information exchange in Illinois visit [HIE.Illinois.gov](http://HIE.Illinois.gov).

To learn more about what is happening nationally visit [HealthIT.gov](http://HealthIT.gov).

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